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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/734,192	12/12/2000	Kazuhiko Tomita	1344.1051/JDH	4249
21171 7590 07/25/2008 STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005				
EXAMINER				
WINTER, JOHN M				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3685				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/734,192

Applicant(s)

TOMITA, KAZUHIKO

Examiner

JOHN M. WINTER

Art Unit

3685

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 May 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 17-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 17-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/IC)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgements

The Applicants amendment filed on May 14, 2008 is hereby acknowledged, Claims 13 and 17-20 remain pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 13, 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 13 contains the term “an accumulated number of cases of repudiation reasons” it is unclear what a “case” of repudiation reasons is, which therefore make the scope of the claim indefinite.

Claims 17 and 18 contain similar limitations and are rejected for the same reasons.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 13, and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nummelin et al (US Patent 6,308,164) in view of Abbruzzese et al., (US Patent No 5,557,515) and further in view of Gundewar et al (US Patent 6,381,610).

As per claim 13,

Nummelin et al ('164) discloses A method of electronically authorizing or repudiating an electronically processed task, comprising:

storing a plurality of elements forming tasks into a database subsequent to an electronic authorization or repudiation of said tasks;(Column 7, lines 24-37 [validating information input into specific fields.... Input or update project data])

each of the said plurality of elements including a user identifier requesting authorization and /or repudiation reasons and a date of authorization and/or repudiation. (Figure 2, Column 8, lines 37-59 [the secondary field values may include designation of a organizational department])

retrieving repudiation reasons of elements stored from said database that match elements forming a task to be electronically authorized and a user requesting authorization of said task; (Column 6, lines 37-49 [retrieves status reports for designated operators of equipment i.e authorizer of the task; it is obvious that the task status would be derived from the elements stored in a database.,also generally disclosed by Figure 2,3; Figure 2 discloses task elements in database, Figure 3 discloses verification/authorization process.])

Nummelin et al ('164) does not explicitly disclose "and displaying said retrieved repudiation reasons of said elements stored and retrieved repudiation reasons for the user in association with said elements of the task to be electronically authorized" Abbruzzese et al

('515) discloses "and displaying said retrieved repudiation reasons of said elements stored and retrieved repudiation reasons for the user (Figure 9A, column 64, lines 56-67, column 65, lines 1-67 [the diary function shows alerts for items that need processing, table LVII has a field for "reason" i.e. repudiation reason.]) in association with said elements of the task to be electronically authorized "(Column 65 – lines 29-67) It would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Nummelin et al ('164) method with the Abbruzzese et al ('515) method in order to detect when a case needs additional managerial attention.

Nummelin et al ('164) does not explicitly disclose " wherein of said elements forming the task to be electronically authorized an element among said elements displayed is designated as a checkpoint is provided for review based on a number of said retrieved repudiation reasons for the task and the user and an accumulated number of cases of repudiation reasons within a designated term is displayed as the check point." Gundewar et al. ('610) discloses " wherein of said elements forming the task to be electronically authorized an element among said elements displayed is designated as a checkpoint is provided for review based on a number of said retrieved repudiation reasons for the task and the user and an accumulated number of cases of repudiation reasons within a designated term is displayed as the check point. ". (Column 5 – line 14 through column 6, line 4) It would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Nummelin et al ('164) method with the Gundewar et al. ('610) method in order to detect when a project fails to meet projected goals.

Claims 17- 20 are in parallel with claim 13 and is rejected for at least the same reasons.

Response to Arguments

The Applicant's arguments filed on May 15,2008 have been fully considered.

Applicants respectfully submit that Nummelin does not disclose or suggest at least the feature of "retrieving repudiation reasons of elements stored from said database that match elements forming a task to be electronically authorized and a user requesting authorization of said task", as recited in claim 13.

The Examiner responds that this feature is disclosed as cited above; Column 6, lines 37-49 and generally disclosed by Figure 2,3; Figure 2 discloses task elements in database, Figure 3 discloses verification/authorization process.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHN M. WINTER whose telephone number is (571)272-6713. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-6, 1st Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Calvin Hewitt can be reached on (571) 272-6709. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JMW

/Calvin L Hewitt II/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3685